

some architect or other to furnish them with one, for which they would have to pay a fair price. If they approved of the design, well and good; if, however, he did not suit them at all, as might be the case, they would either be obliged to obtain the services of some other architect or else carry out a design with which they were not pleased; now, this difficulty they overcome by calling on architects to submit designs for approval, in many cases offering no remuneration whatever for the trouble they give. What they seek by competition is not to bring forward the most talented, who, perhaps, for want of connection or some other cause, may not be able to make his name known, but to obtain the best advice for themselves at the least possible cost. The present system is bad, and requires amendment; it has long been cried out against, but that is not sufficient; one or two members of the profession cannot effect what all might easily do; it rests with ourselves, then, to apply the remedy. If your influence can effect this you will be rendering a lasting obligation on the profession. **RAPHAEL BRANDON.**

THE GAS MOVEMENT.

Has now an impetus that will carry it through all obstacles. It needs no further fostering care from any one. The public, everywhere, have been enlightened as to its merits and its purposes, and there is no longer any attempt to throw dust in their eyes, or even sterner obstacles in the way of a steady, prudent, yet determined and not very slow reduction of cost, and a consequent wide-spread diffusion of the benefits of good gas-light throughout the dwellings of the people at large. Our next crusade may even be one more obviously on the side of the diffusers of the light themselves, in aiding them—now that their own groundless fears and their own inveterate obstacles are being and have been overcome—in battering down those—it may be no less stubborn—fortifications of inertia and old habit which may still oppose the access of the light, even when available in cost and purity, within the domestic sphere of the million, where there is so vast a field for its profitable diffusion.*

That our systematic, matter-of-fact, reiterated, proofs that reduction of cost has ever been, and will yet for a long time ever be, the sure forerunner of an equivalent rise in profits to the companies themselves, are now beginning to be duly appreciated, even where there is not the candour to give the credit of it to our own demonstrative and persevering exertions, may be gathered from the recent published opinions of parties interested on behalf of the companies, as well as in that diffusion of the article to which we have proved, by repeated instances, that such reductions surely and inevitably lead. From a book of this class on gas-lighting, by Mr. J. O. N. Rutter, recently published by Parker, West Strand, we may quote the following remarks, in the truth of which we all the more cordially agree, inasmuch as they constitute the burden of that very outcry which we dinned for so long into deaf ears.

"The tide has turned. Men are growing wiser. Large profits, on limited transactions, and from few customers, have had their day. The reverse of all this has now to be tried. Small profits, on extensive transactions, and a great number of customers, are in the ascendant. Better had it been if the adoption of these views had not been so long delayed. Most of the large provincial towns have passed, or are now passing, through the ordeal of low prices. Whatever at first may be the difficulties, there needs only courage, and patience, and perseverance [on the part of the companies he is advising of course], and all will come right. There may be fears; but there ought also to be a bold margin allowed for confidence. The efforts of those who led the way in reducing prices have been abundantly rewarded. Whilst some companies have been looking on, struggling, and deliberating, doing nothing, and not knowing what to do, the business of others has increased so rapidly as to have outgrown all their expectations. In every instance where the experiment has been fairly tried, it has been successful. There is an elasticity about gas-lighting understood only by those who have experienced its

effects. Relieve it from the pressure of patronage and privileges, from protection and, its constant attendant, high prices, and it will soon exult in its freedom from such unnatural restraints.

A movement in the right direction has been commenced. It needs all the aids, and energies, and other appliances of persuasion and explanation to help it forward. The advantages of gas-light in private houses are beginning to be understood. It is still only a small beginning, and, in numerous instances, it has not even come to that. Gas companies must extend their operations. Low prices, and a small rate of profit, require large returns to pay satisfactory dividends. Here is a field so extensive, that all may labour in it, and in which the ground is so well prepared, that the results will be immediate, and in exact proportion to the energies put forth. The difficulties are but trifling, and many of them imaginary. By devoting constant and special attention to the lighting of private houses, a new business might be created.

Amidst the changes which are in progress, and the new light which is breaking in upon trade and manufactures, something must be ventured, or nothing great will be achieved. There must be confidence as well as hope—effort as well as expectation. In gas-lighting, low prices, within safe commercial limits, are the secret of success. Of this the examples are so numerous, and the illustrations so decisive, that they all point in the same direction. There is no longer either occasion, or excuse, for doubts, and fears, and forebodings. Those who were most frightened acknowledge they have been more frightened than hurt; and others, who were very lately brooding over anticipated losses, have begun already to reckon their gains."

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

THE first stone of the new church at Birch was laid on 26th ult. It is to be in the Middle Pointed style, and to consist of nave and aisles, chancel, tower, and spire.—material, flint with Caen stone quoins: accommodation for 500; cost about 3,000*l*. Mr. S. S. Teulon is the architect, and Messrs. Baldiston and Son, of Ipswich, are the builders.—The rebuilding of Cranoe Church in the Early Pointed style, with nave, chancel, and porch, has been completed, and the edifice opened for service. It is roofed with red and black Newcastle tiles, with crested ridge: the old tower has been retained. The nave is 37 feet long, 21 wide, and 27 high: chancel, 13 feet long, 14 wide, and 24 high: architect, Mr. Bland; builders, Messrs. Ridding and Thompson. The chancel windows are filled with stained glass by Messrs. Powell and Co.—A new organ has been built in Barkby Church, by Messrs. Forster and Andrews, of Hull, at the sole cost of Mr. Pochin, of Barkby Hall. The occasional absence, or want of an organist, is supplied in this instrument by a dumb organist,—an apparatus which plays thirty tunes without interfering with the internal arrangements.—The foundation-stone of a new town-hall and market-house was laid at Brentford, by Lord Robert Grosvenor, on Thursday week before last.—The restoration of Salisbury Cathedral spire is far advanced towards completion. The vane has been replaced.—The General Hospital burial-ground, opposite the Commercial-rooms, Bath, has been covered with concrete 5 inches thick.—The Chester Baths and Washhouses were opened on Monday week before last, and during the first three days 2,406 persons availed themselves of the baths, 2,184 being admitted at the charge of one penny.—The nave roof of Hatton Bonville Church, near Northallerton, for some time in a precarious state, fell, lately, and broke the pews and seats to pieces; a boy was much hurt, but the workmen employed in making a new roof were fortunately absent.—The foundation stone of a new congregational church was laid at Cokermonth on 27th ult. It is to be of white stone in the Pointed style, from a design by Mr. C. Eaglesfield, of Maryport. Length 72 feet 6, breadth 45 feet 6, height 60 feet. There will be seats for 550 adults and 200 children. Cost 1,700*l*, of which 700*l* is yet to be subscribed.—The foundation stone of a new parish church was laid at Drigg, according to the *Carlisle Journal*, on Friday week.—The Lord Provost and magistrates of Edinburgh are determined to use every exertion to have the Wellington monument, designed by Mr. Stuebe, and destined for the front of the Register House, placed in preference on the grand terrace to be laid out

with statues, &c., along the Princes-street Gardens, at the Scott monument, certainly a very eligible site for such a monument. Some remarks on the subject will be found under another head.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

IN the strictures you have made in your last number on the proceedings of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers, you have hardly, I conceive, gone so far as the public interest would have warranted you in going. The fact is, the present commission is incapable of transacting properly the accumulated and accumulating business of the whole of the metropolitan district. It was the opinion of all practical men, that the business could not be carried on by one commission, but their evidence was excluded from the reports, and none but evidence on one side of the question taken. What is the fact as proved by a year and a half's experience? I can speak from personal knowledge of one district: it is left in the hands of one of the inferior officers of one of the late commissions,—one of their least efficient officers,—with no one to appeal to who has any knowledge of the locality; whilst I and others feel that we are left without our old protection against partiality and injustice. Can anything be worse than the proceedings of the commission? One commissioner has seceded because the acts of the commission are illegal; all the chief officers resign because the statements and proceedings of the commissioners tend to draw down ridicule and contempt upon them as officers of the commission.

I feel convinced, Sir, we must return to local commissions, and have a general committee deputed from the local commissions, with proper powers conferred upon them, reversing the present ill-considered and hasty piece of legislation. What is the practical effect of the present commission? All business is transacted by two or three in committee, whilst so much presses on the court at large, that virtually there is no check upon the committee, and the public is without that safeguard that ought to exist. The act is one of those pieces of legislation that is termed *smuggled* through Parliament; only thirty-five members were present when the bill passed the House of Commons. I foresaw and placed on record the evils likely to accrue from the present system; and every evil that I foresaw is now in active operation.

I will not trespass further on your time except to add, that I have fully appreciated your publication as being the only one that contains regular and full reports of the proceedings of the commissioners, which reports I trust you will continue for the present at least, as well as your own occasional remarks. T.

LAW OF CONTRACT.

BURTON F. TRUSTEES OF ADELPHI CHAPEL, HARKNEY.

ON the 7th, an action was tried in the Court of Common Pleas, brought by Thomas and Henry Burton, builders, of Aldersgate-street, against the trustees of the Adelphi Chapel, West Harkney, to recover the sum of 6,405*l*, for extras, beyond the sum of 2,340*l* agreed to be paid for the building of the chapel,—such extras having been ordered in writing by Mr. Owen, the defendants' architect.

For the defendants, it was contended that there was no case to go to the jury, for the contract and specification stipulated that no alteration should take place in the building unless its cost was laid before the trustees and they consented to it by signature; and that, also, their architect and surveyor, Mr. Owen, was bound by the contract to certify that he was satisfied with the execution of the works. Neither of these stipulations had been complied with.

The plaintiffs were non-suited.

GRANITE.—A block of granite was lately blown out at the Dartmoor works, the length of which was 30 feet, breadth 23 feet, height 24 feet; cubical contents, 16,800 feet; it weighed no less than 1,330 tons. It is intended for the Government works at Morice Town.

* A correspondent ("X.") has sent us some very pertinent remarks on the domestic advantages of gas. The proper place for these, however, will be in the amount which it may be necessary or desirable to make in aid of its introduction throughout all the dark corners of domestic retirement.